



JONAH

running from mercy



“When God’s Mercy Offends”

June 14, 2026

Text: *Jonah 1:1-4a*

Sermon Series: “Jonah: Running From Mercy”

Pastor Bob Erbig

Discussion Questions:

- **Opening Question:** Imagine watching someone get rescued and being angry about it. Be honest: is there a person, group, or category of people whose forgiveness or blessing would secretly bother you? What does that reaction reveal?
- **Read 2 Kings 14:23–27** together. Jeroboam II "did evil in the sight of the LORD," yet God expanded Israel's borders through him out of sheer compassion — and Jonah was the prophet who got to announce it. Why do you think Jonah had no objection to undeserved mercy here, but ran from it in chapter 1?
- Where do you see a "2 Kings 14 theology" in your own heart — grace for your own failures (or your family's, or your nation's) but justice for someone else's? What would it take to want mercy for "them" as much as you've received it?
- **Read Jonah 1:1–3.** Jonah flees "from the presence of the LORD" — yet as a prophet he certainly knew God is everywhere (Ps 139:7–10). What do you think he was actually fleeing from? Have you ever stayed outwardly religious while quietly resigning from something God asked of you?
- **Two Joppas:** Compare *Jonah 1:3* with *Acts 10:9–16, 34–35*. Both men were at Joppa; both resisted God's heart for the Gentiles; one sailed away and one went. Peter's turning point was seeing that "God shows no partiality." What partiality — ethnic, political, cultural, economic — most tempts our church or your own heart?
- Pastor Bob said, "**The most frightening thing God can do to a runaway is nothing.**" Looking back, has God ever mercifully disrupted your life when you were headed the wrong direction? How did you interpret it at the time versus now?
- God's mercy will reach Nineveh because someone was sent. What is one specific thing you will do this summer to help the gospel reach people who have never heard it — pray, give, or go?

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- The greater Jonah didn't knock on the burning house — He entered it (Matt 12:39–41; Rom 5:8–10). How does remembering that you were once the "Nineveh" in the story — an enemy shown mercy — change both your offense at grace and your willingness to carry it to others? **Spend time praying for one person or people group by name.**

The background of the page features a soft, painterly illustration of a sea with a city in the distance. A figure is seated on a rocky shore under a tree. Overlaid on this is a large, white, stylized tree graphic where the branches are human figures with their arms raised, symbolizing growth and community.

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